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Willamette Fig Gardens

A New Industry for Oregon

Visitors are always welcome

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Commercial Fig Culture in the Northwest

By R. B. Amend

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It is my object as a fig fancier not only to set forth in this bulletin something about how these fig varieties really found their way into our wonderful Oregon climate, but in-so-far as possible to give some facts about the varieties that are suitable for Oregon's climate. I learn that the good ones are so scarce that I warn all folks to be extremely careful in selecting fig trees, if it is the ripe fruit that you want, as well as a beautiful and ornamental tree. Any fig tree will grow and make shade but few will ripen their figs.

With that in mind I have prepared this little bulletin on figs in Oregon. The Willamette fig gardens are located almost in the heart of the Rose City and contains the largest collection of varieties in the northwest.

This orchard is approaching its eighth year and my first tree is in its seventeenth year. These varieties are from most all fig-growing countries. I have had twelve years experience with fig growing and selecting best of varieties and have familiarized myself with methods of many fig growers.

VARIETIES of FIGS

For Oregon and Washington there seems to be only four or five varieties that are worth planting either for commercial planting or home use and I name these in the order of their desirability as I see it.

LATTARULA, (White), the Asiatic Honey fig. It ripens two crops each season. First crop July 15th to August 15th, and the second crop September 10th to October 10th and it is used for eating fresh or preserves, marmalade and many other kinds of confection.

GRANATA (Black), the persian fig grown in Persia and Syria. This is the largest fig I have ever seen it being not at all uncommon to see figs measuring eight inches in circumference. This fig bears two crops a season and can be used for any purpose the Lattarula is used for.

X GILLETTE (Yellow), the French fig. This fig ripens one crop during August and never has a barren year, so sure of a crop. Undoubtedly the heaviest bearing fig I have ever grown. This variety is fine for eating or for marmalades.

NEVERALA (Blue). This is the Syrian fig and ripens one crop during October. White pulp and very sweet, bears young and seems to be hardy and a fast grower.

✓ BRUNSWICK (Brown), commonly known as brown turkey. A good fig after the tree gets to be four or five years old. Figs drop while the tree is young. This fig is grown in Oregon more than most any other variety.

I have many new varieties that are not old enough to show best results and possibly I will discover more varieties suitable for Oregon.

I wish to say these varieties are self-polenizing and need no fig wasp or other artificial polenizing to make their fruit come to maturity. The blossoms are inside the fig until the fig begins to ripen, then the whole fig becomes a honey-like pulp.

When a fig is ripe and ready to eat the neck of the fig will become weak and the fig will droop or hang down; then the fig is ready to pluck.

PLANTING

The best time to plant the trees is Feb. 1st to April 15th, as there may be freezing weather the latter part of January.

To plant a fig tree, or any other for that matter: take off the top soil from a space four feet in diameter. This soil is usually ten to twelve inches deep. Then take out the hard pan, gravel or sand ten inches deeper; then spade up the bottom of this hole; then put back good soil mixed with some lime and well rotted manure, enough to about half fill the hole; then set your tree in the center with strongest roots south west; now spread out all the roots, even comb out the fine hair roots, as they will be big ones some day; then put back enough good top soil to fill the hole nearly full; tramp this well around the tree; then give a

soaking of water; then after the water soaks away fill the remainder of the hole, but do not tramp the soil. Then your tree will be well planted and will need but little more attention aside from watering for the first year. Do not water your fig tree until the ground begins to show drying out. We usually begin to water about July 1st; then only about once in every ten days or two weeks, that is if we do not have rain. Only water during July and August and the first week in September. By all means do not plant fig trees in your lawn where it gets the cold hydrant water most every day as this will keep your figs from ripening. Fig trees want damp soil but not wet. If your tree has made twenty inches or more growth the first year, cut back one half of this growth during February or March; then the following years cut out interfering limbs. The fig tree needs very little attention after the fourth year.

Do not plant fig trees near other large trees as this will hinder their growth and they will not bear if planted in the shade or where the sun cannot warm the ground around the roots. Do not spade close to the tree after the second year; in here lie the fruit roots and they should not be disturbed. A good mulch of well-rotted manure is better. Some lime and water will greatly help hold moisture. Do not spray your fig trees. If you do while the figs are small (May, June), you will surely loose the first crop. This is the time most fruit trees are being sprayed.

No serious or destructive insect seems to bother the fig in Oregon so far.

Do not handle the young figs. Hands off until they are ripe.

Do not trim fig trees in summer months. If you do they will send out growth where you do not want it and will have to be removed later again. So prune when your tree is dormant. February and March is the best time. Do not let suckers grow around the base of the tree, keep them cut away. We do.

Give your fig tree a good coating of well rotted manure every spring. This will hold moisture and will give you an abundance of figs each year. .

Since the fig tree bears fruit over a period of

three and one-half months, it is very important that they have humus, moisture, fertilizer and sunshine.

Since we have varied climatic conditions in some parts of Oregon and Washington, I find that it is not advisable to plant fig trees in localities where the temperature falls to ten above zero. The fig will endure ten above zero with out much injury after the tree gets into the third year of its growth. I advise protecting the young trees the first two years by banking up soil or wrapping with burlap or leaves. After the third year they take care of themselves in-so-far as protection goes. I have learned that fig trees are growing in many localities from Bremerton, Washington to the California Line all along the western coast. The reason fig trees freeze at or near zero is because they are sub-tropical and never become entirely dormant. If they do freeze down they replace their growth in two to three years and again bear fruit true to the old root as the roots never freeze.

What we can do to the figs that we grow and ripen in our Oregon climate. We can and do ripen two crops a season covering a period of three and one-half months. We can eat them out of hand or slice fresh with cream, sugar and spices. We can make many kinds of confection. We can and do make marmalades, preserves, jellies and pickles. We furnish you with recipes for any of the above free of charge.

The fig makes a good diet for sick folks who cannot eat fruit with acid in it. A California writer says that the fig makes the best balanced chicken feed known. This makes the fig in Oregon a valuable asset as every living thing will eat the fig. As a food the fig has no equal. It has more healthful properties, food units and body building elements than any other fruit.

We have a splendid exhibit at our mother gardens of the fig products prepared for winter and out of season visitors. This alone is worth a visit to our fig gardens. It is made up of candies, marmalades, preserves, pickle, jellies syrups and in the fresh state. We learn that the fig can be preserved in more ways than any other fruit.

We hope to establish fig gardens in many parts of Oregon and Washington to prove that figs will grow commercially here.

We have added to our fig industry the **MISSION ARBOR GRAPE**. This is undoubtedly the best arbor grape we have ever grown. Grows rapidly, bears very heavily and is a very fine table grape. This grape is a white colored turning to amber in late fall. This grape begins to bear in its second year and has a very high aroma. We frequently pick grapes after Thanksgiving from the vines.

TERMS

We exercise the greatest care to have all nursery stock true to name and well rooted, free from insect pests and in a good live condition. If any trees prove to be otherwise we will refund money paid with interest, or replace the trees.

Cash with order unless otherwise arranged.
Special price on large quantities of trees.

PRICES

LATTARULA (the Honey fig), two year old rootings, \$2.00 each.

GILLETTE (the French fig), two year old rootings, \$2.00 each.

GRANATA (the Persian fig), two year old rootings, \$2.50 each.

NEVERALA (the Syrian fig), two year old rootings, \$1.50 each.

BRUNSWICK (the Brown Turkey, two year old rootings, \$1.00 each.

MISSION ARBOR GRAPE, 50c each; \$5.00 a dozen.

Special price on four or more of a variety.

Fresh figs and grapes at reasonable prices for sale in season and Fig Marmalade in winter and out of season.

**If you receive an extra Bulletin
please pass it along to a friend**

WHITE FIG MARMALADE

A delicious marmalade is made from the white or black fig. Take perfectly ripe and fresh figs, peel off the thin soft skin or leave it on, grind up the figs through your food grinder, and to every two pounds of figs use one and one-half pounds of granulated sugar, and if you like a touch of other flavor than the fig, add a little grated peel of orange or lemon. A little of the juice will also add to the taste. Boil all together until the whole is reduced to a thick, clear, smooth mass. Do not stir too much, as this will cause the marmalade to sugar sooner after being made. Use an asbestos pad under the kettle; this will keep it from burning and also it will need but little stirring. When done put into jars while hot and cover closely.

Those who like less sugar, can use one-half pound of sugar to a pound of fruit, and it will keep perfectly, provided it be boiled till it is very clear and smooth.

Yours for Success in growing Figs in Oregon

The extremely severe weather of last December did practically no damage to any large fig trees and some damage to young tender nursery stock.



"LATTARULA"

THE ASIATIC HONEY FIG